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PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW

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ARTICLES and FEATURES

Franz Joseph Haydn

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Record Reviews

Our Staff Critics

Edited By

Axel B. Johnson



The Phonograph Monthly Review

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In Memoriam

WE record with deep regret the passing of Lieutenant Commander John Philip Sousa, who died in Reading, Pennsylvania, on March 6th. Mr. Sousa's death ended a period of not less than forty-two years of extraordinary service as Bandmaster and Composer.

John Philip Sousa was born in Washington, D.C., November 6, 1854. His father was Portuguese and his mother Bavarian. He studied with John Esputa from 1864-67, taking mostly violin, but also band instruments, and from 1867, while playing in the U. S. Marine Band and in civilian orchestras took up theory and composition with G. F. Benkert. After being conductor of the U. S. Marine Band from 1880 to 1892, he formed the Sousa Band, giving the first concert at Plainfield, N. J., on Sept. 26th, 1892. With this he has made annual tours through the United States and Canada, besides four tours in Europe and one around the world. The Band has played at almost all the great Expositions besides long engagements at various places. Its leader acquired the soubriquet of "March King" in 1885 from a foreign journal.

His compositions make a long list, including 10 comic operas, 8 suites, the scenic "Sheridan's Ride", and the symphonic "Chariot Race", almost 100 marches, about 20 dances, about 50 songs and several arrangements. Among his best known marches can be named first of all "Stars and Stripes Forever" which when played by Sousa and his band never has failed to thrill an audience. However, music critics differ when asked to select the finest of Sousa's many marches. Other famous marches are: "Manhattan Beach", "Liberty Bell", "Washington Post", "High School Cadets", "El Capitan", "Semper Fidelis", "King Cotton", "Hail to the Spirit of Liberty", "The Fairest of the Fair", "Sabre and Spurs", "Golden Jubilee", "Solid Men to the Front", "Riders of the Flag", "Field Artillery", "The Pride of the Wolverines", "The Volunteers" and many others too numerous to mention.

His individual style of conducting and program-making combined with the inimitable presentation of his own marches brought him the instantaneous success he enjoyed even at his very last concert.

During the Spanish American War he served in the Sixth Army Corps of the United States Army.

Upon the entrance of the United States in the World War, Mr. Sousa offered his services to the Navy and was placed in charge of over a thousand young men in the Bands of the Great Lakes Naval Training Station in Illinois.

On the annual tours with the Band, Mr. Sousa was feted in almost every city by the different patriotic, civic and fraternal organizations in a manner befitting his position as one of America's foremost citizens.

Excellent recordings are available of nearly all of the popular marches, particular fine are those made by Sousa's Band for Victor.

I was among those who counted it a deep pleasure to know him personally, and his death comes with a keen sense of personal loss. I have no doubt but that many of the readers of this magazine were acquainted either directly or indirectly with Mr. Sousa's genial and friendly personality, and I know that they will join me in expressing to his widow and children the regret we feel over theirs and our loss.



Franz Joseph Haydn

By R. D. DARRELL

ON the night of March 31st-April 1st, two hundred years ago, a son was born to a poor Austrian couple, Matthias and Maria Anna (Koller) Haydn, wagon-maker and former cook to the gentry of Robrau, a small town near the Hungarian border. The family was musical: the father sang and played harp accompaniments by ear. "Sepperl" as Franz Joseph was nicknamed, became a choir-boy, and on the change of his voice drifted naturally into the wandering, semi-vagabond life of a music student of those days.

The goal of every music student was a post of *Kapellmeister* in the court or home of some nobleman. The path was not strewn with roses, for the luckless apprentice had to sandwich his studies as best he might among his duties as valet, accompanist, copyist and boy of all work. Even when he had obtained the coveted title, he was little more than a servant, obliged to wear livery, eat with the staff, and attend to odd jobs as well as to compose appropriate music for the multitudinous festivals and private concerts.

Haydn's natural good-humor and even temper enabled him to bear the discomforts of his profession philosophically, and he labored indefatigably over the new compositions, in "neat and clean" copies, that were incessantly demanded of him. For some thirty years he was assistant and full-fledged *Kapellmeister* to the Esterhazy family, whose head during most of this period was Prince Nicholas "the Magnificent," himself something of a musician, a soloist on the now obsolete barytone for which instrument Haydn wrote nearly two hundred compositions.

Haydn's private life was as prosaic as his career. Proposing to the younger daughter of a Viennese wigmaker, he was induced by the father to take the hand of the eldest instead, a shrewish individual, he soon discovered, who valued his musical scores only for their convenience for use as curl-papers. He had one romance, but it was as luckless as his marriage. The object of his affections was also married, and years later when both were freed by the death of their spouses and Haydn had signed a formidable document to the effect that he would marry no one but

Loisa Polzelli, she casually deserted him to marry a singer by the name of Franchi.

In music he found the only outlet for his talents and abundant spirit. His fame assumed modest proportions. He became the friend of Mozart and other musical notables of the time. He annexed pupils, among them an uncouth, strong-tempered young man by the name of Beethoven. But for the death of Prince Nicholas and the breaking up of his orchestra Haydn would probably have remained in the service of the Esterhazy's until his death.

But thrown on his own again with a modest pension from the Esterhazy family, Haydn began to reconsider some of the invitations he had received and declined to visit foreign parts. An English musician and concert manager, utilizing what we would now call high pressure salesmanship, visited him one day and announced simply, "I am Salomon, of London, and have come to fetch you. We will agree on the job tomorrow." Haydn was vastly amused by the word "job," and finding the terms of the contract too attractive to refuse, set out with some reluctance and trepidation for England.

His concerts there were something in the nature of a counter-attraction to the series of one of his former pupils, Ignaz Pleyel, but they were successful, and Haydn enjoyed the dubious honors of a sensational celebrity. A year of concerts and forced composition left him exhausted, but after less than two years after he had returned to Vienna, he was again prevailed upon to visit London. During his two visits there he wrote no less than 768 pages of music, but his earnings, some 24000 gulden in Austrian money were enough to enable him to live in reasonable comfort for the rest of his life. He died in 1809, during the Napoleonic occupation of Vienna.

The simple story of a simple soul, like his compatriots, Schubert and Bruckner, undistinguished save in his music. The two hundredth anniversary of his birth will be the occasion for much lip service to his eminence, but we may expect no festivals such as attended the centennials of Beethoven and Schubert, no large-scale publication of memorial recordings.

Of all the great names in music that of Haydn figures almost least on contemporary programs. Many of his some 1000 works have never been published. A complete edition was begun around 1909, the hundredth anniversary of his death, but it has been pursued very sporadically and is still far from completion. His historical importance as the codifier of the sonata and symphony forms is universally recognized (indeed often over-emphasized), but the influence of his music today is entirely negligible. Strawinski may "go back" to Handel or Halffter to Scarlatti; Bach, Gluck, Mozart, and Beethoven still cast a potent spell on composers. But who goes back to Haydn?

He has been damned by the affectionate nickname that suits him so well in some respects, so badly in others. He is "Papa" Haydn to us, a naïve, happy-go-lucky, somewhat garrulous old gentleman in a pig-tailed wig, whose music is nicely adapted for appreciation work with children and the musically immature, or as a breathing space on a program devoted to weighty fare that requires close attention. Berlioz came close to sealing Haydn's fate years ago when he wrote so cleverly of a Haydn symphony as belonging "naturally to the kind of naïvely good and gay music that recalls the innocent joys of the fireside and pot-au-feu. It goes and comes, never brusquely, noiselessly, in morning negligé, clean and comfortable; it hums a tune and now and then cracks its little joke; it opens the window to profit by a warm sunbeam; a poor man passes in the street, one is moved to humble pity and gives a sou or a bit of bread, and is satisfied within, and thanks the good God for having a sou and a bit of bread for the poor. Then one prudently takes an umbrella, and goes to the café to play dominoes and drink a pot of beer seasoned with inoffensive gossip; and at nine o'clock goes home, puts on a white cotton nightcap, says a prayer, gets into a good feather-bed and sleeps there in the peace of the Lord. The orchestra understood perfectly the style and ways of this amiable composition; it has drawn its claws, mewed gently, drunk its milk with a charming gracefulness, without opening wide its great lurid eyes, without bristling its long whiskers, without shaking its tail, like a virtuous cat of the presbytery. The audience was delighted. No wonder: one likes to drink a bottle of good wine with an honest fellow when one meets him."

Well, no one can deny that Haydn is often the musical embodiment of the honest fellow and safe bourgeois. But is Berlioz' the last and final word? Listening to the recorded

performances of some of his best works one is seized with doubts. Not everything fits perfectly into the neat classification in which Haydn has been placed. A little study devoted to the works that have been heard so often complacently and thoughtlessly, and one begins to realize that another Frenchman has said the truer word: "The smallness of the frame, astonishing at first and at which some are inclined to smile, envelops the minutest details in an atmosphere of intimacy in which the charm of very simple language is felt. One submits to it willingly, and it is only later, when the times comes for analysis and reflection that one discovers how wrong was the first impression of a careless childish, spontaneous art. Haydn sings ingenuously, from the depth of his heart: composes scientifically with all his intelligence."

It is not too late, even after two hundred years, to reconstruct our notions of Haydn and to gain a keener insight into his music. Instead of a perfunctory performance of a few familiar works, we can best honor him by a thoughtful hearing of some of his best works, preferably those less well known, to be heard and studied as carefully as we would hear and study an entirely new and stirring work by a modern composer.

The list of recordings is small, but still offering considerable more scope than the average concert season. For the most part they have been done quite well, considering that Haydn's music is seldom as easy to play well as it might seem on the surface, and also considering that many works of his time or earlier have been sadly over-weighed or distorted in contemporary performances.

Of the one hundred and three symphonies (150 or more if we include the various overtures and suites that used to be classed among the symphonies), only seven have been recorded, but this is not a bad proportion when it is remembered that scarcely more than a dozen are ever played in concert. Passing over the "Surprise" and "Clock" symphonies as already familiar, I need only say that both have been recorded superbly, the former by Koussevitzky, the latter by Toscanini and Harty. The "Military" symphony was one of the first by any composer to be recorded in this country. Unfortunately the old discs by the Victor Orchestra have long since been withdrawn and the only electrical version, conducted by Kleiber for the Vox company in Germany is probably known only to a few unusually avid collectors. I recommend most strongly the splendid symphony in G known variously as No. 13, No. 88, or No. 8, according to the edition. It is

conducted—a little too powerfully perhaps, but still very ably—by Krauss and issued in three ten-inch discs. Scarcely less striking is the "London" symphony, conducted by John Barbirolli (two versions). In both of these works one will find a delicate lyricism in the slow movements, an originality and sweep in the others that ill accords with our conventionalized, notions of a decorous, childish garrulous Papa Haydn.

Two other fine symphonies, as yet only available in acoustical versions, are the "Oxford" and "Farewell," the only unrecorded works in the Polydor pioneer series of Haydn symphonies. Incidentally, they still sound pretty good when played on a modern electrical phonograph, for the modestly sized orchestras employed were surprisingly well recorded under the old process at its best.

Most of the early symphonies are of course symphonies by courtesy only, like the "Toy" symphony, a delightful *jeu d'esprit* whose savor is still keen. The minuet was often omitted, either in the writing or the performance. Many are strictly overtures—of which, by the way, there is one recorded example. But many of the latter symphonies, particularly in the Salomon series, deserve concert and phonographic attention. I might name off-hand the lovely work in E flat (No. 10 of the Salomon series), "La Reine" with its quotation of a French arietta, "La Poule" with its unmistakable reference to the clucking that figured in Rameau's harpsichord piece of the same name, and the "Drum Roll" symphony (B. & H. No. 1).

The only other important recorded orchestral works are the Overture in D, conducted by Heger (already mentioned), the little *Eighteenth Century Dance* conducted by Stokowski, and the fine 'cello concerto—a concert favorite of Casals—played by Suggia and conducted by Barbirolli.

The vast Haydn literature of stage and church music is almost entirely neglected in concert as well as on records. We might look to Christschall or Music Sacra in Germany for a recording of some of the many masses, *Stabat Mater*, *Te Deum*, *Seven Words of Christ*, etc., but from whom may we ever expect the operas or the works for marionettes (*Dido*, *Der Götterrath*, etc.) that stimulate one's imagination from catalogue listing alone? The two great oratorios, *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, written after Haydn had returned from London and under the inspiration of Handel's works which he had heard there, are performed often enough to warrant more ample phonographic attention than they have received to date. Several excerpts are available from the former, but only two from the latter.

Most of the solo instrumental works are at best names in catalogues. Scarcely a majority of the fifty-three piano sonatas are published, and that there is worthwhile music among them is attested by Kathleen Long's records of the fine work in C minor, one of the many not included in my Augener edition of twenty-four sonatas. The Air and Variations in F minor, a work of very considerable stature, is played quite frequently in concert, but as yet there have been no recordings. Two other sonatas have been recorded by Polydor, but although they are electrical, they have already been withdrawn. Considerable interest is attached to records of two lesser keyboard works, the sonata for harpsichord played by Violet Gordon Woodhouse, and the minuet in E flat recorded from a performance on a Mozart piano of 1790, giving an excellent idea for how Haydn's piano music sounded in his own day.

The chamber works are better represented, but again one finds only a handful of well-known works among the seventy-seven quartets, sixty-eight trios, and twelve violin sonatas. Only one trio has been recorded, the work with the familiar Gypsy Rondo finale, but it has been done in masterly fashion by the incomparable Cortot-Thibaud-Casals combination. There are twelve recorded quartets, but of these three are available in their entirety only in acoustical versions.

The early quartets are represented by the "Serenade," Op. 3, No. 5, beautifully played by the Lénérers but unfortunately not recorded electrically. The other is known as the "Bird" quartet, Op. 33, No. 3, from its amusing use of bird songs and particularly the sprightly development of a cuckoo call in the finale. This, in the Roth Quartet's performance, is a priceless legacy of the all too brief needle-cut recording activity of the Edison Company.

The quartet in C, Op. 54, No. 2, is characteristic, but the adagio strikes a deeper note than most of the works of the same period. The Musical Art Quartet's performance is not particularly polished, but it is enthusiastic and spontaneous, an appropriately youthful reading of refreshingly youthful music. The six quartets in Op. 76 include the best examples of Haydn's writing in this medium and fortunately each has been recorded at least once. Of the two versions of No. 1 I prefer that by the Budapest String Quartet, although the Poltroneiri version is better recorded and occupies one less record side. Elman's String Quartet does the second in admirable fashion; also the variations on the Kaiser Hymn from the third, or "Emperor" quartet. The only complete version is the acoustical one by the London String Quartet.

The fourth and fifth, and especially the sixth, are remarkably fine works that should be far better known than they are. The International String Quartet and the Léners provide performances that could hardly be bettered.

Regrettably, the Flonzaleys were never recorded in Haydn quartet (unless of course one is included among their unissued works).

A casual hearing of many of these works will disclose all the familiar Haydn-esque qualities of good humor, naïvité, and sprightliness. But a more careful study will reveal much more. Haydn's melodic and architectural construction is the work of a finished craftsman. Spontaneous as the flow may be, it is not the natural, uncultivated song of a musical peasant. A glimpse at a Haydn manuscript will show with what care he wrote, re-wrote, deleted and added, until the eventual spontaneity was laboriously acquired. There may be nothing revolutionary in his use of the orchestra. He never rebels at the bounds which could hold Beethoven for so brief a period. But in the perfect balance of parts, the harmonious blending of tonal colors, the deft and delicate use of every instrument, one finds again the hand of the master craftsman. Looking deeper into his works than the surface, we can find a lyricism often comparable with Mozart's, a lustiness comparable with that of no other music. There is ingenuity, but there is also restrained strength and sweep. And through it all there blows the sanest, most healthful air of all music.

Haydn assuredly is not one of the poets of music, but he is just as assuredly one of its great masters of prose. His vitality and *joie de vivre* renders his music indomitable by age or development of idiom. It is rich in sentiment, honest and unashamed, springing from the rich soil of Croatian folksongs, but the sickly cast of sentimentality never sullies the delicate surface of this eternally virginal music.

Brenet has found in the words of Heine, written of another genius, the finest insight into Haydn's music: ". . . the serenest grace, an ingenious sweetness, a freshness like the perfume of the woods, a natural truthfulness . . . and even poetry. No, this last quality is not absent but it is poetry without the thrill of the infinite, without the charm of mystery, without bitterness, irony, or morbidity; I might almost say, the poetry of perfect health."

In our incredibly sensitized, decadent music and lives of today, Papa Haydn brings a glorious breath of the "poetry of perfect health." One has a twinge of regret that music outgrew its innocence and childlike

heart, that Beethoven should come after him to stir music with the storm of human passions, that Wagner should fuse them into almost unbearable white heat, that Strawinski should evoke from the past the fearsome echo of barbaric lust, even that Delius should "summon up remembrance of things past" in a nostalgic introspection that touches us too deeply, too intimately.

Whatever may have been the passion and pessimism in Haydn's own life, he brought to his art only joy. And since that childlike joyfulness is one to which we may never return, it is a staunch support of sanity and health in an all too insane today.

Papa Haydn wears his wig and two hundred years as lightly as his smile, a smile that is never a grin, and never a grimace.

A HAYDN DISCOGRAPHY

(Words marked with an asterisk are acoustically recorded, and have not yet been replaced by electrical versions).

Symphonies

- D minor, B. & H. No. 2 ("London"), cond. Barbirolli (Victor; N. G. S.)
- D minor, No. 4 ("Clock"), Toscanini (Victor), Harty (Columbia).
- G major, No. 6 ("Surprise"), Koussevitzky (Victor), Blech (H. M. V.), etc.
- G major, No. 11 ("Military"), Kleiber (Vox)
- G major, No. 13, Krauss (Victor).
- G major, No. 16 ("Oxford"), Knapperts (Polydor).
- F sharp minor, No. 18 ("Farwell"), cond. unnamed (*Polydor).
- Toy Symphony, Weingartner (Columbia), Victor Concert Orch., etc.

(NOTE: No. 13 is also known as No. 88 in the new B. & H. list, or as No. 8 in the Peters catalogue. The "London" and "Clock" symphonies are frequently listed in D major, instead of D minor.)

Orchestral Works

- Overture in D, Heger—Vienna Philharmonic (European H. M. V.).
- Eighteenth Century Dance, Stokowski—Philadelphia Orch. (Victor).
- Concerto in D for 'cello and orchestra, Suggia, cond. Barbirolli (H. M. V.).
- Adagio only, Hekking (Fr. Columbia), Bettermund (Polydor), Casals (Fr. Columbia).
- Theme and Variations in E flat, Victor orch. (Victor Educational Series).

Quartets

- F major, Op. No. 5, Lener Quartet (*Columbia.)

—Serenade alone, Wendling Qt. (Polydor), Virtuoso Qt. (H. M. V.).
 C major ("Bird") Op. 33, No. 3, Roth Quartet (Edison—needle cut).
 C major, Op. 54, No. 2, Musical Art Quartet (Columbia).
 D major ("Lark"), Op. 64, No. 5, Capet Qt. (French Columbia).
 —Menuetto only, Lener Qt. (Columbia—odd side Debussy quartet).
 —Vivace only, Musical Art Qt. (Columbia—odd side Haydn Quartet in C, Op. 54, No. 2).
 E flat major, Op. 64, No. 6, English String Qt. (*Columbia).
 C major, Op. 74, No. 1, Rondo only, Virtuoso String Qt. (H. M. V.)
 G minor ("Horseman"), Op. 74, No. 3, Buxbaum Qt. (Polydor).
 G major, Op. 76, No. 1, Budapest Qt. (H. M. V.), Poltronieri Qt. (Italian Columbia).
 D minor ("Quinten"), Op. 76, No. 2, Elman Qt. (Victor), Poltronieri Qt. (Italian Columbia).
 C major ("Emperor"), Op. 76, No. 3, London String Qt. (*Columbia).
 —Theme and Variations only, Elman Qt. (Victor), etc.
 B flat ("Sunrise"), Op. 76, No. 4, International String Qt. (N. G. S.), Baaxbaum Qt. (Polydor).
 D major ("Largo"), Op. 76, No. 5, Lener Qt. (N. G. S.).
 E flat, Op. 76, No. 6, International String Qt. (N. G. S.).

Trío

G major, No. 1, Cortot-Thibaud-Casals (Victor).
 —Gypsy Rondo only, Victor Educational Lists, etc.

Piano

Sonata in C minor, Kathleen Long (N.G.S.)
 Sonata in C major, Günther Homann (Polydor).

Sonata in D major, Günther Homann (Polydor).
 Sonata in F major, 1st movement only, Jean Inglis (Eng. Columbia).
 Minuet in E flat, Charlotte Kaufman (played on the Mozart piano of 1790) (Polydor).

Harpsichord

Sonata in D major, Violet Gordon Woodhouse (H. M. V.).

Violin

Minuet in D major (arr. Hartman), Renée Chemet (Victor).

Cello

See 'cello concerto under "Orchestral"
 Menuet, Cassado (French Columbia).
 Menuet (arr. Piatti), Casals (Sp. H. M. V.).

Flute

Adagio Cantabile, Noordewier (Belgian Columbia).

Oratorios: "The Seasons"

"Komm, o holder Lenz," Singakademie Chor, cond. Georg Schumann (Electrola), Berlin Volks-Chor (Homocord).
 "Hört das laute Oretton," Berlin Volks-Chor. (Homocord).

"The Creation"

"The Heavens are Telling," Sheffield Choir (Columbia), Temple Church Choir (H. M. V.), Basilica Choir (Polydor).
 "Stimmt an die Saiten," State Opera Choir (Electrola), Basilica Choir (Polydor).
 "Vollendet ist das grosse Werk," State Opera Choir (Electrola).
 "With Verdure Clad," Elsie Suddaby (H. M. V.), John Bonner (Eng. Columbia), Lotte Leonard (Polydor).

Misc. Vocal

My Mother Bids Me Bind My Hair, Anna Case (Columbia), Elsie Suddaby (H. M. V.).
 Del mio Core, Jenny Sonnenberg (Polydor).

Giacomo Meyerbeer

By JAMES HADLEY

GIACOMO MEYERBEER has had a greater influence on the development of modern opera than any other composer except Wagner. He set the example in the arrangement of effective alternations of scenes and situations. Massenet, Gounod, Reyer, Saint-Saëns, Puccini—even Verdi in "Aïda"—made

deep obeisances to Meyerbeer. Indeed, without "Robert le Diable" there would never have been an "Aïda" at all. Wagner modelled his "Rienzi" slavishly upon the Meyerbeer plan.

At the time of his highest eminence Meyerbeer dominated all the stages of Europe with

a brilliant authority that triumphantly defied all opposition. Few musicians have aroused so much enthusiasm, and few, perhaps have been so harshly judged, yet, whatever his shortcomings, they were certainly more than redeemed by qualities which amply justified the unique position he occupied for so many years as the supreme master of opera.

Hans von Bülow once said: "Meyerbeer, after all, was a man of genius. The general disregard of Meyerbeer's genius is not only an injustice; it is an act of ignorance and ingratitude."

"Robert le Diable" was the work with which Meyerbeer burst upon the world of French opera. Produced in 1831, at the Grand Opera in Paris, it was as great an event in the operatic world as Victor Hugo's "Hernani" was in that of the drama.

The fantastic story, with its weird, supernatural vein, was such a sensational success that it made the fortune of the house, and inaugurated the brilliant reign of Dr. Véron as manager. The production was of the utmost magnificence.

Meyerbeer was regarded as little short of a demi-god: his lightest word was law, and all his directions were carried out to the letter.

A man of handsome private fortune, he made enormous sums by his operas, and was probably the wealthiest of the great composers. All his life Meyerbeer was the *grand Seigneur*. He certainly knew how to spend his enormous emoluments in a noble way, and no sacrifice was too great for him if it served his purpose. More than once he paid great instrumentalists considerable sums so they might play important soli in the opera orchestra. He defrayed the expenses of rich costumes for his prima donnas, always insisting upon the best and most costly, and he even engaged supernumeraries in order to make the stage groups more imposing. Nothing had been left undone to make "Robert le Diable" an assured success. Nourrit and other famous artists composed the distinguished cast of singers. The greatest dancers of the age were in the ballet, and the idolized Taglioni led the band of resuscitated Nuns. Inspired by Weber's "Freischütz," Meyerbeer composed this romantic, legendary opera. "Robert" was the work which introduced the Romantic school into France, and made it palatable to the French taste. Its popularity as well-nigh unbelievable. During the first twenty years succeeding its production, it was performed 333 times at the Paris Opera. For, after all, the Meyerbeer operas were a product of their time. They belong to the era of Victor Hugo

and Dumas—the era of romantic intensity and the statuesque pose. Here we find romanticism in its fullest flower.

Meyerbeer is himself the Dumas of grand opera. Among other innovations Meyerbeer has given us, in place of the long and cumbersome overture, the short and characteristic prelude. This composer had a singularly sharp eye for whatever was striking and theatrically sensational: indeed, his appreciation of dramatic effectiveness has seldom been equaled, and never surpassed. Accordingly, in this brief prelude we are thoroughly prepared for the weird and supernatural scenes of the opera

E. H. 371 Roberto il Diavolo, Overture—Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera, direction, Dr. Leo. Blech.

The music gives wonderful emphasis to the words, and how superb are certain pages of "Robert" when sung in the grand manner.

An admirable example of this quality is found in the world-famed aria, "Robert O. Tu Che Adoro." from the third act. It is sung magnificently by Madame Matzenauer. (Victor, 88365: special white seal pressing).

In the domain of the weird and terrible Meyerbeer worked with unerring certainty. Immensely effective is the scene from act 3, where Bertram, a demon in human shape, is alone in the cavern of St. Irene, amidst wild and gloomy mountain crags. He awaits Robert, whom he has enticed thither, certain of his ultimate triumph over the young man's soul. He prepares the materials for incantation, and the fires of Hell gleam for the first time in the music. A great chorus of spirits is heard giving vent to demoniac joy at the prospect of a new victim for their talons. He hears the hellish mirth of the demons and their frenzied dance. A few bars in waltz time, where the viola is conspicuous, dominate the final notes of his recitative. Then, from subterranean caverns rises the infernal chorus in B-minor. In this remarkable passage we hear the voice of Bertram blending with those of the exultant demons, with wonderful effect.

Victor 6176, "Valse Infernale." Marcel Journet, with opera chorus. (Records of Historical and personal interest).

The most famous of Meyerbeer's ballets is in "Robert le Diable." The composer's genius for musical rhythm is one of the most marked elements in his power. This is especially noticeable in his dance music, which is very bold, brilliant and voluptuous; the most spontaneous side of Meyerbeer's creative fancy is found in the vivacity and grace of these stirring measures.

Robert, having gamed away his honor and wealth, is assured by Bertram that all shall be restored to him if he will visit the ruined Abbey of St. Rosalie, and secure a magic branch which grows there. In a superb invocation, "Ye slumbering nuns," Bertram commands them to rise from their graves, and so tempt Robert that his soul will be forever lost.

Victor, 6371, "Nonnes, Qui Reposez"—Plancon. (Records of historical and personal interest).

Victor, 6710. Invocation (Ye slumb'ring Nuns—Ezio Pinza.

Thus he summons from the nether world the nuns whose shameful lives profaned these altars dedicated to purity. The sepulchres open, and the nuns, wrapped in their cerements, come out and advance stealthily, while unearthly music of trumpets, muffled strokes on the gong accompanies the resurrection. A gruesome touch is the low 3rds and 6ths on two bassoons, *soli*. Liszt's apropos, but entirely unmentionable, joke need not be repeated here. This highly beautiful procession of nuns has always been one of the most famous pages of the score.

V. E. H. 307 Robert der Teufel, March and Ballet music—Orchestra of the Berlin Staatsoper. Leo Blech. Part I and II.

The march of the phantom nuns is followed by the second number of the ballet, "The Seduction of Gaming." In an expressive dance-pantomime, Hélène and the nuns lead Robert to where gold and dice are laid out. Mingled with the strains of a captivating waltz is plainly heard the rattle of the dice in the orchestra.

The second side of the disk begins with the third air de ballet, "The Seduction by Love." In a spirited ensemble the coryphées endeavor to charm and entice the hero. At the 23rd measure Hélène enters the magic circle and joins in with an independent pose—a *pas seul*—in which she displays her utmost graces and alluring gestures. Especially beautiful is the voluptuous passage for the violoncello which accompanies the movements of the first dancer.

This is an unusually fine example of what Meyerbeer could accomplish in the siren vein. This dance-poem of classic beauty occupies nearly all one side of the record. After it, however, as an appropriately brilliant *finale*, we hear certain phrases of the wild orgy of the resuscitated nuns—the Bacchanale.

It is no exaggeration to state that the production of "Robert le Diable" marks a most important date in the evolution of the lyrical drama. The impression it created was

enormous. It rapidly conquered the world, and met with the same enthusiasm wherever it was performed.

The work triumphed in spite of a series of mishaps which threatened to mar the success of the opening performance. One incident occurred at the commencement of the celebrated scene of the resurrection of the nuns, a curtain of clouds becoming detached and almost falling upon Mlle. Taglioni, the famous dancer, who, as the chief abbess, was about to rise from her tomb. Meyerbeer was greatly affected by the incident and so overcome was he that it required some time to fully persuade him that the falling scenery had not really caused Mlle. Talioni's death. There are many stories concerning his dread of death, and his horror of even having it mentioned in his presence.

He seems to have been greatly afraid of being buried alive. In his pocketbook after his death was found a paper giving directions that small bells should be attached to his hands and feet, and that his body should be carefully watched for four days, before its final disposition.

To be continued

PHONOGRAPHIC ECHOES

Americans Lead in Music Listening

New York, Feb. 27—Americans today are the most cultured music listeners in the world, in the opinion of Sir Thomas Beecham, English conductor.

"Our English audiences take their music without giving it much thought," he said. "They never discuss it with the intelligence the Americans display."

George Washington Anniversary Song Recorded by Columbia

The feature record on the Columbia mid-February release carries the selection "Father of the Land We Love," specially written by George M. Cohan in connection with the celebration of Washington's two-hundredth birthday. This song has been chosen by the United States Washington Commission as the official song. It will be sung at all the countless ceremonies to be held in towns and cities throughout the United States.

Robert Hood Bowers and His Orchestra play "Father of the Land We Love" in stirring fashion. On the reverse there is a medley of patriotic airs.

Prosperity

The sale of pianos and of sheet music is beginning to boom again, according to a publication of the music industry.

The statement is made that one piano firm showed an increase of 22½ per cent in the number of pianos sold in the first 10 months of 1931 compared with the same period in 1930.

De Luca's Broadcast

Mr. Giuseppe de Luca's talk on the "Music Treasure Box" broadcast of February 10, from Station WJZ, New York.

By Courtesy Musical Publications Co.

Ladies and Gentlemen. I am glad to be here tonight, to say how do you do, and to greet my friends of the phonograph, which has helped make so many friends for me. I believe I am one of those who first made records—when the Victor Company began to make the Red Seal known to many people. My old friend Enrico Caruso and I sang in those days in the Victor studios. We wanted very much to have every song, every aria, go out to our public on the records as we sang. So we would sometimes sing one number many times, before we were satisfied. They did not have electrical recording then. We were, as you say, in the pioneer stage. And because that was so we artists all tried to give a little extra something, to make the records as fine as we could. Caruso and I used to speak about it, a long time afterward when the way of recording had improved so much.

As I listen to the records of my colleagues, I am glad for everybody who likes fine singing. I am glad because it brings the great singers before them in a nice way. Quite as though they had dropped into each home for a small recital, so to speak.

From the time I first came to this country, to appear with the Metropolitan Opera Company, I have learned how much the American people like the singing artist. That has made me happy, and has made me want to come back each new season to be in the casts of that famous company managed by Mr. Gatti-Casazza.

From what some people have said to me, and what has been said to others, I think the phonograph record is doing something to please. And if you don't like what you hear on the phonograph you do not have to applaud.

Your country—the one in which I have spent more than half of each year since 1915—is very musical. Not only in New York, but in the other cities where I have sung in both opera and concert, I have noticed the quick understanding of what is good. Also what is not so good. The American people make up their minds quickly.

I believe the phonograph has helped to give many the chance to hear good music. Many who lived far away from where they could get to the opera and to the concert performance. It has been the friend also of the student, who could sit listening to how the great artists make music.

A gentleman I know, who likes sometimes to make a joke, said to me once: "Ah De Luca, I heard you sing last night."

"But," I say, "I did not sing last night."

He laughed and said, "Excuse, but you did—you sang for me, privately, on my phonograph."

So I say to you, ladies and gentlemen: I am happy to sing for you whenever you like—on your phonograph.

Good night.

A Much Needed Survey

A survey to determine exactly how much time of every radio program in the United States is devoted to advertising, how much time on the air is sold, and what percentage of programs are educational is being conducted by the Federal Radio Commission, according to a questionnaire received by Music Corporation of America. It is understood that similar questionnaires have been mailed to every radio station and radio advertising agency in the United States.

Some New Polydor Records

Brahms' *Second Symphony in F-major* was recorded by W. Damrosch on Columbia and by Stockowski on Victor. Now comes *That fiedler* with *The Berlin Symphony Orchestra*, and plays his version of The Second Symphony on 9 sides of Polydor 12-inch-records (Nos. 95453-5x). This performance differs from both previous versions. There is a lack of the brilliancy which is so typical to Stockowski's version, but on the contrary there are some passages which have a greater power, and when the beautiful phrasing is more evident. On the tenth side you can hear *The Scherzo* from *The Trio for Piano in C-major* also by *Zrhus* and played by the same orchestra as the symphony. The recording is good.

There will be perhaps different aspects, but for myself there is a real discovery in Pfitzner's music. We can be thankful to the Polydor for the beautiful and perfect recording of *The Introductions* to the three acts of the Opera "Palestrina" by Pfitzner played by The Berlin State Opera Orchestra under Pfitzner's own time beater on three Polydor discs (Nos. 95459-6i). Pfitzner is not a modern composer, but his music has such a wonderful force, such a noble severity and great "ethos," that it will be recognised as classical. This is my own viewpoint, but I think that there will be a great majority which will agree with me. These three fine records deserves the place, which is reserved to great musical works in a library of records of everybody who takes his passion seriously.

Czechoslovakia

H. B. Zirak "Quintet for wood-wind instruments." Op. 34. (Allegro marcato; Andante con intimita; Allegro leggiero). Played by "Pražské dechové kvinteto" (Prague wood-wind quintet). Three Parlophone records. (B. 84.609, B. 84.634, B. 84.612): 10-inch.

Prof. K. B. Zirak, composer, conductor, musical pedagogue and author of books on music is one of the greatest personalities of the modern Czech musical life. This saison he has conducted in Prague some concerts and everytime his performance was a great event. With all his wonderful force of imagination he revives all chef d'oeuvres of Czech composers. He goes back to Bach and brings this great clearness also into such works, as Smetana's "My Country," Dvorak's Symphony, etc. Prof. Zirak is trying to put this music on the clear, pure lines. He shows the architecture, the wonderful spirit and the absolute value of music. He shows us the *pure* music without any romanticism accumulation. He made the music cooler, but more international, more *absolute*. His efforts are a matter of discussion between Czech connoisseurs of music. Prof. Zirak goes his own ways.

Also his quintet has this tendency to the pure music. It is a fresh, fine work, which has received the first prize for the year 1930 on the international music festival at Lüttich (Belgium). I recommend this quintet to all friends of music, who are interested in the modern trends and developments in the creative art.

The performance and the recording are excellent. Prof. Zaroslav Kricka: "Babičciu marovský valčík" (Grandmother's waltz-er) of Marsov and *Estadrata-Polka*. Played by The Radiojournal Orchestra of Prague under the composer. Ultraphone (Czech) A. 10102 (10-inch).

Prof. Kricka, the composer and musical pedagogue, is a good lover of folk tunes and popular music. He likes the simplest song if it is well-done, but he refuses everything that seems to be half-done or a superficial musical industry without respect and without inner right. Prof. Kricka knows that the inner sources

of music are lying deep in the substance of folk tunes. He knows also that the modern mechanical era is not nourishing the creativeness of the country-people. Therefore he means that a modern composer is also obliged to write music for the folk. And so Prof. Kricka revives the old traditions and this wonderful "musiciancy," so typical for Czech country-life. This "waltzer" and his polka are fine examples of this effort. Both are played with gusto by the Radiojournal Orchestra under the composer. The recording is good.

Dr. Ant. Dvorak: Waltz No. 1 and 4, Op. 54. Played by The Radiojournal Orchestra of Prague under Prof. Jav. Kricka. Ultraphon (Czech) A. 10105 (10-inch).

Prof. Kricka is not only a good composer of operas, folk tunes and various songs, but he is also a fine conductor. This record of two waltzes by Dvorak is worth getting.

Ach synku, synku (Oh, my son). Koupim ja si kone urany. (I shall have black horses). Two Czech folk songs. Sung by Prague song quartet (known as The Revellers of Prague). Ultraphon (Czech) A. 1004 f.

Listen to this beautiful record! I hope you will discover the inner connection of these simple songs with all great masterpieces of Dvorak's, Smetana's, Janacek's and other Czech composer's creative art. *Zaromur Weinberger*, the composer of Schwanda, the bagpiper, says: "If there is in our country something of a larger European format then it is our folk song. Such a song as "Synka (Oh, Son) is as beautiful as the most wonderful melody by Beethoven." He is right with his opinion, for if the music by Beethoven is the greatest expression of agencies, then the folk song is the great expression of feeling and inner gladness of a musical folk. The Prague song quartet sings with fresh and agreeable voices. The recording is good.

Jar. Jezek: "Bugatti-step" (from the Revue Don Juan and Comp.) Piano solo played by Harry V. Noe; *Jar-Jezek: "Don Guan Waltz"* (from the mentioned revue). Played by The Liberated Theatre Orchestra under Jar Jezek. Ultraphon (Czech) A. 10166 (10-inch).

Jar Jezek is a serious composer, but he has devoted also a section of his work to the modern dance music. Jazz music is not a strong point in Czech musical making while some Czech composers are living in U. S. A. (Friml, Zamecnik, etc.) Jar Jezek is one exception. Jezek has his own ideas and he can express them in a good style and with a good understanding for the instrumentation. For some years he has made the music for the revue stage of Voskovec and Werich, the famous young comedians and revue stars, who are playing and singing in their own "Osvobozené divadlo." (The Liberated Theatre) in Prague. Jezek's good music will be interesting to American audiences.

Zugatti-step is an older composition, which was created under the impression of the Zugatti racing automobile. Zugatti is known for its high number of revolutions and so is the Zugatti step, running also with a great speed. It is played well. The backing is more melodious but the fundamental idea is not so original as this of the Zugatti-step. This music by Jezek is quite different from American dance hits. Compare! The recording is excellent.

E. UGGE.

Informal Artist Gathering

Theatrical and night club history is being made in Chicago this winter by Ben Bernie, "the ole maestro", who holds forth nightly at the College Inn of the Hotel Sherman with broadcasts over WBBM and the Columbia network.

"He's making history," Jules C. Stein, president of Music Corporation of America explains, "because Ben

Bernie's Theatrical Nights each Thursday evening at the College Inn have become the talk of show folks from coast to coast, and Chicagoans rush to be among the lucky 1,200 persons who can crowd into Mr. Bernie's party room."

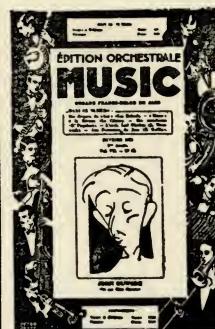
Mr. Bernie's astute habit is to tempt to the Inn theatrical stars at midnight each Thursday and with wit and cheer leading to excite them to do their specialties for cash customers. The result is that he produces, between two and three o'clock on the ensuing Friday morning, a revue which outshines most theatrical productions in talent.

On a recent evening, for instance, Eddie Cantor stood for almost thirty minutes reciting anecdotes and rolling his innocent eyes most comically, although he had spent a solid week, he admitted, in the dressing room at a Chicago theatre.

Maurice Chevalier, idol of the Parisian music halls and one of movieland's brightest stars, caught the spirit of "Chevalier Night" recently and sang after song for the edification of theatrical folks and others who crowded into the College Inn. Even Al Jolson fell for the lure of a Ben Bernie Theatrical Night and found himself down on his knees singing "Sonny Boy," "Mammy," and some of his other successes during the night's merrymaking.

That such an assortment of stars will sit up until 3 A.M. is not unusual, but that they will work at Mr. Bernie's call is something of a phenomenon. There is no other situation quite like it in the night life of the world's capitals today. It is not a waste of time for the actors to take bows and applause from the 1,200 Chicagoans who crowd into the Inn on those Theatrical Nights; but that they should sing or play their level best without compensation is most unusual.

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Rue du Foré aux Loups.

Gus Arnheim Greeted Home

When Gus Arnheim brought his famous Cocoanut Grove orchestra to Chicago the last week in January for an engagement at the Cafe Winter Garden, he was returning to his home town for the first real visit in sixteen years. Gus, a former Chicago boy, and Abe Lyman started out together in orchestra work in the Windy City. Arnheim played piano and Lyman drums in a small combination which used to furnish music at the dance halls and back room saloons. The Arnheim opening at the Winter Garden was a great homecoming. Stars of stage, screen and radio gathered there to greet him. Among them were Ben Bernie, Harry Richman, Amos 'n' Andy, Paul Whiteman and Ted Weems.

Every Number is a Record Number

The Gramophone

Edited by

Compton Mackenzie

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MUSICAL WEST
MUSIC and the DANCE
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Correspondence

The Editor does not accept any responsibility for opinions expressed by correspondents. No notice will be taken of unsigned letters, but only initials or a pseudonym will be printed if the writer so desires. Contributions of general interest to our readers are welcomed. They should be brief and written on one side of the paper only. Address all letters to CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN, THE PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW, 69 Marion St., Medford, Mass.

Edison Records Again

EDITOR, PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW:

I am a reader of your magazine and would be very much pleased if you could answer a few questions about Edison records. First, were any of the Edison records electrically recorded? Second, is there any possibility that the Edison Company will again record or that some other company take their place? Third, have all Edison matrices been destroyed? Finally, do the various record agencies keep Edison disks in stock and is there any demand for them?

I now wish to state that I enjoy your magazine very much, especially the Correspondence column when there is a discussion about historic records or ways of getting

Seeing my impatient effusion of October in print, gave me quite a shock, but when I compare the October issue with that of January I think I was justified. Incidentally, I am not one of those remarkable gentlemen who appreciate both jazz and the classics.

Braintree, England

S. F. DANCE

better results in phonographic music. I also like certain of your articles but do not care for reviews of popular music.

Lackawanna, N. Y.

R. F. G.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Will reply in April issue.

Top Notes

EDITOR, PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW:

I think mention should be made in PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW of Pierre V. R. Key, editor of "Musical America" and "Top Notes," who every Wednesday at 6 P.M., E. S. T., broadcasts from WEAF a discourse entitled, "The Musical Treasure Box," in which he introduces notable artists or composers who interpolate brief comments on records and recording.

On February 10th, 1932, Giuseppe de Luca was introduced. He spoke, in part, of his recording experiences with Caruso, and added a highly significant observation to the effect with the appreciation of the magnificent modern record is one of the most emphatic indices of cultural ascendancy.

New York City, N. Y.

M. HARRIS

Hands Across the Sea

EDITOR, PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW:

Having renewed my subscription of the strength of your promise of regular reviews of dance records, I have received your January issue. The "Popular-Dance" section pleased me immensely; "Rufe Harlem"—presumably not a very distant relative of the ill-treated "Rufus"—spreads himself to advantage and hands out good advice to some of those possessing the intellect capable of absorbing it; in this case, the Brunswick Corp., the Boswell Sisters and the Casa Loma Orchestra.

At the moment Brunswick seem quite supreme in the world of recorded dance music and vocalists, so that our ears will undoubtedly be favoured with even more ambitious work from the three Boswells, although remembering their versions of "It's the Girl"; "Shout Sister," "Stardust" and "An Evenin' in Caroline" this seems a lot to expect.

"Rufe's" gentle and timely reminder of the Casa Loma's "hot" qualities will, I hope, gain for us another masterpiece of the "White Garr" standard. Is there a better white dance orchestra than this group in America? Radio and records have convinced me that there isn't.

Something more ambitious might reasonably be demanded from Ben Bernie's gang which contains excellent performers on trumpet, trombone, alto-sax, clarinet and drums. A string-bass would undoubtedly improve most of this orchestra's recordings but no doubt the sousaphone tickles the Bernie sense of humour.

The white dance orchestras, however, really don't seem worth worrying about nowadays; Red Nichols' imagination seems temporarily to have deserted him; Hoagy Carmichael is very lazy, as far as discs are concerned, for we could do with quite one record a month from him; Frankie Trumbauer is but a shadow of his former self.

This leaves the negroes to supply all the new ideas and they certainly are fully capable of it. The orchestras of Don Redman, Duke Ellington, Chick Webb and Fletcher Henderson, not forgetting Mills' Blue Rhythm Band, give us finer and more imaginative dance music than we have ever had before. But for the genius of the aforementioned, and a few others, "jazz" would surely be swamped with dreary waltzes and atrocious German melodies.

Praise from Texas

EDITOR, PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW:

The February issue came today. It is the best issue in a long time.

The January issue, I did not receive, due perhaps to my change-address-notice not reaching you in time. I would be much obliged if you would arrange to send me another copy of the January issue, reducing the length of my subscription one month.

I trust you will notify me when my subscription draws to an end. I do not recall the month, but I think it was in July that I subscribed. Now that the paper seems to be on the up-grade again, I should not wish to miss it.

I enjoy the articles you have been running on recording artists, by Mr. Walsh. I hope he will continue to write for the magazine and that he is progressing on the book that he has undertaken.

Why don't you induce Mr. George Oman to resume contributing? With Mr. Walsh and Mr. Anderson, I think the reappearance of Mr. Oman would contribute materially to the benefit of the paper.

With kindest personal regards and every wish for the success of the paper, I remain,

Houston, Texas

M. E. DANCY

EDITOR'S NOTE: We regret to inform that Mr. Oman is quite ill at his home in Chicago.

Some Plain Facts

EDITOR, PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY REVIEW:

To my way of thinking, the most important thing to the phonographic world today, is not merely the maintenance of interest in phonography, but its revival. There is no gainsaying the fact that the art has been permitted to suffer a number of deleterious influences, but if my experience as a dealer is any criterion, the hardest blow it has had to sustain is the result of the decreased purchasing ability of many of its devotees. Unemployment and the disposition of employers to take advantage of those who still have work, on the ground of a falling labor market have tapped the surpluses out of which thousands of records were purchased every month formerly.

The next hardest blow was inflicted by the trade itself. It offered too wide a variety of choice things in too short a time. The surfeit first bewildered, and then palled. A stupor of satiety ensued. One who is a gourmet experiences the same degree of discouragement in an elaborately stocked, metropolitan delicatessen store. *I know!*

The third blow was of the "psychological" sort. The fear of obsolescence was propagated by the announcement of new types of records. Fortunately, the record brotherhood is already adjusting itself to the new order, and the old and new records will, in all probability, survive side by side in the performance of their obvious respective functions. Some complaints about the new records have been heard. Well, I heard the records myself at Camden. I need only suggest an analogy. The man who soared to heavens of satisfaction in his rear entrance Haynes-Apperson of a quarter of a century ago, grumbles today because there is a slight swish from the fan belt of his 1932 V-16 limousine.

That brings us to the fourth blow. We have had

too much criticism. We have become hypercritical. A merely good record is no longer good enough:—records must be describable in superlatives to be casually acceptable. The tailor and his wife enjoyed the one opera performance for which they saved all year. When they became rich and heard the opera weekly they, too became hypercritical, captious, and, in the end, unhappy. They no longer attended the opera: it bored them.

Well, if our income is curtailed, we cannot buy as we were wont to, unless what we buy has been reduced in price in the same proportion as our income. Records enjoyed little, if any, increase in retail price when prices went up: we need, I suppose, expect only small recessions as prices fall.

The monthly supplements are becoming leaner the while the trade rests on its oars, and the record buyers get a breathing spell to catch up on acquiring the earlier releases which they were unable to absorb because of the speed with which they came. This is good. The catalogs are full of surprises for those who are willing to renew acquaintance with them.

The new records and mechanisms, at first viewed with frank hostility, are potential life savers. The best thing to do with these mediums is to abandon the practise of "dubbing" as soon as possible, and to issue entirely new matter by—perhaps—new (and restricted) performers of the most eminently commendable order, upon them—without concurrent releases of identical matter upon the old-type discs. (In expressing this view now, I am inconsistent with some of my earlier observations to some extent. I confess to having been exposed to a bit of "education.")

In fact, we must all become "educated." "Re-educated" would be a better word. After all, one can enjoy fried fish and be competent to judge of its condition by the most elementary criteria, without having to be able to subsist indefinitely under water himself. Too critical an attitude towards music is akin to the disposition to resolve a joke into its elements. It ruins it. People who do that pull wings off flies. Later they ask for queerer flies: pulling wings off the standard ones becomes "hackneyed." You know what I mean. Even a fly can at first be classic; then rococo.

We can counter the paucity of purchasing capital by enlarging the number of devotees. Producers of records and record playing machines must organize for concerted propaganda efforts. The present family of loyal "discophiles" must preach that records are not for the rabble; they're "high-hat,"—cultural objects. Much thought should be given to forming phonographic clubs in our high schools on a par with their literary societies, wireless clubs, et cetera. Home recording should be encouraged, and the radio broadcasters who are affiliated financially with the record producers should encourage home recording by announcing whole performances or occasional selections as particularly suitable for or worthy of recording. It must be definitely impressed upon the public consciousness that records and radio go hand in hand and that a straight radio is only *half* a machine. A machine of the end table sort ought to be developed, embodying a two-speed turntable, radio and amplifier *in the table itself*, but the speaker, in any kind of artistic housing, should be independent of it. Call it a lazy man's outfit, but the easier a thing is to use, the more rapidly the public takes to it.

No business can flourish unless its popularity increases. The beauty and advantages of music from discs must be made gradually, yet painlessly, apparent to the public at large. The continued loyalty of the older collectors is, in itself, a provocative object lesson. Other people of discernment and good taste will take note.

Richmond Hill, L. I.

A. J. F.

RCA VICTOR

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW RECORDINGS

Symphony No. 4 in A Major (opus 90) by Mendelssohn. Played by La Scala Orchestra of Milan, conducted by Ettore Panizza, on four double-faced 12-inch Victor Records Nos. 11170-11173 . . . in automatic sequence 11174-11177. In Album M-119 with explanatory booklet. List price, \$6.50.

Études Symphoniques (opus 13 and posthumous opus) by Robert Schumann. Played by Alfred Cortot on three double-faced 12-inch Victor Records, Nos. 7493-7495 . . . in automatic sequence 7496-7498. In Album M-122 with explanatory booklet. List price, \$6.50.

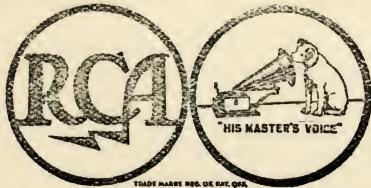
1812 Overture (Tschaikowsky). Played by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra

on Victor Records Nos. 7499 and 7500. List price, \$2.00 each.

Das Veilchen (The Violet) (Mozart) and Sehnsucht nach demn Frühling (Longing For Spring) (Mozart). Sung, with piano accompaniment, by Mme. Sigrid Onegin on Victor Record No. 1556. List price, \$1.50.

Schwanda—Polka and Furiant (Weinberger). Played by Leo Blech and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra on Victor Record No. 4198. List price, \$1.00.

Komm Süsser Tod (Bach) and Minuetto (Haydn). Played, with piano accompaniment, by Pablo Casals on Victor Record No. 7501. List price, \$2.00.



RCA VICTOR COMPANY, INC.
Camden, New Jersey

A Radio Corporation of America Subsidiary

Reviews of New Records

By OUR STAFF CRITICS

CHORAL

BACH: *Cantata No. 4* (Complete), and *Cantata No. 140* (Excerpts), performed by the ORFEO CATALA OF BARCELONA, conducted by LLUIS MILLET. VICTOR MASTER-PIECE SERIES M-120 (5 D 12's Alb. \$7.50).

Those of us who listen as opportunity affords to concert renditions of Bach's Church Cantatas are apt to forget that this form was developed by Bach to meet an immediate liturgical need. The Lutheran Church in Germany, during the early 18th century, used an elaborate ritual which varied in different places. Dr. Terry has re-constructed the Leipzig liturgy of the period which shows that the Cantata, following close upon the Gospel for the day, bore an intimate relation to it. Some two hundred Church Cantatas from Bach's pen have come down to us, and if his son and other authorities are to be believed, he must have written nearly a hundred others which have not survived. The Breitkopf and Härtel Edition of the Church Cantatas in twenty volumes contains one hundred and ninety eight. The numbering follows this edition and has nothing to do with chronology.

The Victor set before us contains a complete recording of Cantata No. 4, and excerpts from Cantata No. 140.

Cantata No. 4 is a setting of Luther's magnificent Easter hymn—"Christ Lag in Todesbanden" (Christ Lay in Death's Dark Prison.) All seven stanzas of the

hymn are used, and together with the opening Sinfonia, make eight numbers in the Cantata. The chorale melody associated with the hymn since 1524, and based on an earlier twelfth century melody, is used in every number, yet there is a surprising variety to the work as a whole. Dating from the early days of Bach's Leipzig period, Dr. Terry thinks it was written for Easter Day, 1724.

In Cantata No. 140, Bach used the three stanzas of Philip Nicolai's hymn—"Wachet Auf Ruft Uns die Stimme" (Sleepers Wake for Night is Flying), with two arias and two recitatives interspersed to add a pictorial touch. The chorale melody, also ascribed to Nicolai and glorified by Bach's genius, clothes the text of the hymn where it is used in the first, fourth, and seventh movements of the Cantata. Only these movements are recorded. Having for a subject the Parable of the Ten Virgins as related in St. Matthew XXV, and with its dramatic watchword "Wake!" the Cantata was written for the 27th Sunday After Trinity (the Sunday Next Before Advent). Only twice during Bach's Leipzig period were there twenty-seven Sundays after Trinity—in 1731 and 1742. Authorities are generally inclined to assign this Cantata to the earlier date.

Both of these Cantatas are superb examples of Bach's work in the Cantata form. Exceptionally noble chorale melodies form their musical bases, just as unusually splendid hymns make up their texts. The combination must have been particularly inspiring to Bach, for certainly these Cantatas are unsurpassed in richness and splendor.

Likewise, the rendition is worthy of the material. Both orchestra and chorus are magnificent, barring a few shrill soprano passages. The recording is fine, particularly of No. 140, though there are some awkward breaks between record sides. Those who know the texts will miss the German words, as the Cantatas are sung in Catalonian.

HERBERT BOYCE SATCHER

ORCHESTRAL

BACH, JOHANN CHRISTIAN: *Sinfonia in B flat major*, and BACH, SENIOR: *Air from Suite for Orchestra*, played by *Philharmonic Orchestra of New York*, conducted by WILLIAM MENDELBERG. VICTOR 7483-4 A (2D12s \$).

The easy-going Christian was the youngest son of Johann Sebastian and a prolific composer, who admitted that he had to compose to live. In his day he enjoyed considerable repute, the Englishman Burney even placing him above his father. The Sinfonia, which Mengelberg has preciously recorded in part for the English Columbia, was originally an overture to an opera, and consists of three movements; Allegro, Andante and Presto. By far the Andante is the most interesting with its long solo for oboe beautifully played by Bruno Labate, who well deserves the honor of being mentioned on the record label. The other two movements are melodious and somewhat in the style of Haydn. The Sinfonia occupies three record sides and the fourth is devoted to Mahler's arrangement of the famous Air. Both are delightfully played by the orchestra and Mengelberg's performance is alert and energetic. These records are interesting both from a musical and historical standpoint.

DE FALLA: *El Amor Brujo (Love the Sorcerer)*, played by the *ORQUESTA BETICA DE CAMARA OF SEVILLE*, conducted by ERNESTO HALFFTER with CONCHITA VELAZQUEZ, mezzo-soprano. COLUMBIA.

When Halffter's version of de Falla's Nights in the Gardens of Spain made its appearance, critical comment was not too favorable. It seems that the pupil of the great Manuel was so engrossed in the details of the work that he missed the general effect. While it is true that Halffter is very fastidious and painstaking as a conductor, it is at least open to question whether a close attention to details is not necessary to an art so highly cultured and subtle as de Falla's. After all those who revel in the pseudo Spanish song and dance will care little for the less sensational and more sensitive de Falla.

The present version of *El Amor Brujo* differs from previous sets in that the vocal part is included, sung in a competent manner by Mlle. Velazquez whose rich, dark mezzo-soprano voice needs no amplification. The solos are the song of love's chagrin, the song of the will-o'-the-wisp, and the song of the "Jeu d'Amour." The performance and recording are both excellent. The orchestra apparently is a small one. Its powers of sonority are not great and one could wish for more body to the strings. The music intended for a ballet suffers in transplanting, as most ballet music does, for much that is significant to the action is quite meaningless as music per se. The well-known "Ritual Dance of Fire" and the languid, lovely "Pantomine," are the most interesting numbers. Unfortunately the effect is spoiled by an injudicious placing on the records whereby a part of two record sides is used in each instance causing an inexcusable break. This could surely have been avoided if three twelve inch records had been used instead of four ten inch records. The why and wherefore of this disarrangement will probably remain a mystery.

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger*: Overture, played by SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, conducted by BRUNO WALTER. COLUMBIA 68023-D (D12 \$).

Walter and his anonymous orchestra continue a notable series with a splendid performance of this overture which hasn't exactly been neglected by the recording companies. The recording is deep-toned and crystalline. If you haven't the Meistersinger Overture in your library by this time, it will be worth your while to investigate this edition.

DEBUSSY: *Nocturnes: Nuages; Fetes; Sirènes*, played by GABRIEL PIERNE and ORCHESTRA OF THE CONCERTS COLONNE, Paris. COLUMBIA 68020-2D (3D 12's \$).

With this Debussy release at least one curiosity should now be satisfied. The connoisseurs knowing that the nocturnes were three in number have wondered when the third, "Sirens," with its mournful chorus of women's voices, would be available over here. It is hardly ever played in American concert halls. Perhaps it is difficult to find the requisite number of sirens. Most of us who are interested in the painter of dreams will be thankful to have an opportunity to hear this work. It is only to be regretted that the performance and recording could not have been better. The faded, muffled quality, previously noticed in other Debussy recordings made across the Atlantic, is again very much in evidence and the attentive ear at times can scarcely distinguish the chorus from the orchestra. The Amicitia Choral Society no doubt is competent enough, but as sirens they are more elusive than seductive. Foreshadowing the modern use of the wordless chorus, this nocturne deserves to be better known and again we look to the phonograph to blaze the trail.

They are several recorded versions of both "Festivals" and "Clouds," with Stokowski sharing with Gaubert. For clean playing and virtuosity, especially in the important wood winds, the Philadelphians under Stokowski are unsurpassed, but the Columbia recording of "Festivals" by Gaubert is the more exciting performance. Pierné lacks some of his countryman's vigor and his orchestra is not comparable with the Quaker city organization, which means the present "Festivals," although an adequate version, is not much else. With "Clouds" however it is a different story. Recording and performance are better here and Pierné gives a beautiful interpretation, one, which in many respects, is more completely satisfying than the recent Stokowski issue.

SAINT-SAENS: *Samson and Delilah—Bacchanale*, played by LAMOUREUX ORCHESTRA, Paris, conducted by ALBERT WOLFF. BRUNSWICK 90214 (D12 \$).

Wolff has apparently been assigned the task of trotting out the old war horses. He can be depended upon. His performances are notable for their brilliance and sound musicianship. He struggles valiantly with Saint-Saens' quaint idea of joy unrefined and even achieves with it a certain plausibility. This disk will appeal to those who care for music of this kind. Stokowski's earlier version however still remains the definitive one, if you must know.

STRAUSS J.: *Delirien Waltz*, played by the STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, Berlin, conducted by ALOIS. MELICHAR BRUNSWICK 90215 (D12 \$).

Who has ever heard this waltz? Although familiar with a large number out of the Strauss repertory we must confess this waltz comes to us as a total stranger. The title connotes, as you might guess, a state of delirium and the music is surely heady wine. The disk label informs us that it is a concert waltz. In reality it is a symphonic movement in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, a poem of ecstasy. There is the usual lengthy introduction and in this Strauss goes completely Wagnerian. The waltz numbers have the true Viennese flavor. The whole composition in fact is the waltz king at his fanciful best and it is surprising that it is not better known.

Melichar here at last comes into his own as recording conductor. Incidentally he has a different orchestra to work with and the change is salutary. It is his most convincing performance to date lacking nothing in verve and spontaneity. The recording is felicitous and the playing by the orchestra is of the high order one naturally expects from recording veterans. An interesting and stimulating disk which can be recommended without reservations.

A. A. B.

INSTRUMENTAL Piano

GARRETTA: *Sardana* (Popular Dance of Catalonia), played by **BLANCHE SELVA**. COLUMBIA 2594-D (D10, 75c).

Mlle. Selva is the sensitive French pianist whose French Columbia recordings of Déodat de Séverac's piano pieces and Bach's Partita in B flat are familiar to many collectors of imported discs. This is her first American release, I believe, for her version of the Franck sonata, with Joan Massia (French and English Columbia) was passed over for American release of the Dubois-Maas version (Belgian Columbia). No one who has heard any of the previous Selva records will need to be told that her playing is exquisitely deft, vivacious and fine-tempered. She is refreshingly original in her choice of selection and this gay Catalonian dance, treated simply but very gayly, gives an excellent opportunity for the exposition of her most characteristic qualities. I am unable to find any information on Garretta, who reveals distinct humor and good taste in his (or her) bright setting, mildly but piquantly sauced, of a joyful Catalonian dance tune.

Catalonia has recently figured in the news as endeavoring to set up an independent republic. It is a province in the north-eastern corner of Spain, bordering the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees, and its people are distinct in origin from the other inhabitants of Spain. Their language, or dialect, is also different, and bears resemblance to Provencal as well as Castilian. According to the authority on Spanish music, Mr. W. S. Marsh, Catalonian music is quite different from that of the rest of Spain. Apparently it has an interesting and fertile folk music, for Mompou (the only important Catalonian composer of whom I have heard) has obviously based many of his piano pieces on the folk idiom if not the traditional tunes (see page 168, Feb. 1931, P. M. R.). Selva and Garretta, as well as Mompou, give us an appetizing taste of Catalonian music, an important addition to the phonographic repertory, as well as a wholly delightful little piano piece in itself.

R. D. D.

BRAHMS: Sonata in G major for violin, played by **ADOLF BUSCH** with **RUDOLF SERKIN** at the piano. Victor Musical Masterpiece Series M-121 (3D12s, Alb. \$).

Although Busch is not exactly a new comer to the ranks of recording artists, this is the first major work to be released in this country. The choice of this sonata was indeed fortunate not only because it fills a gap in the list of Brahms' recorded works, but also because in Busch we have a Brahms' interpreter of the first rank. He recently appeared here as soloist with the Boston Symphony and his performance of the Concerto in D major was the finest within memory. Lacking nothing in finesse, for with him technical competence can be taken for granted, his devotion and artistry kindle Brahms' work into glorious life. Thus played, Johannes becomes the glowing romanticist and you can only wonder at those who have ears and hear not.

Busch, as recording artist, reveals the same keen insight and enthusiasm that he does in concert hall performance. There is a tenderness happily free from over-sweetness. The vibrant melodic line is finely spun and

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the tone is full-bodied and warm. For full measure, Serkin, a pianist of considerable reputation abroad, provides an uncommonly fine accompaniment. Seldom are paired virtuosi ever heard to better advantage. The recording is just right and the tone of the Bechstein, or whatever the instrument is that is used, approximates real piano tone more nearly than is usually the case.

The G Major Sonata is the first of three sonatas for violin and piano which date after the first two symphonies and the violin concerto. It is sometimes known as the Regen Sonate, because in it Brahms harks back to one of his earlier songs, Regenlied. It is a theme beloved of Brahms, than whom no one could better evoke the mood suggested by the words of the song, "Stream down, rain; awaken my old songs, which we used to sing at the door when the drops were pattering outside. Would that I could listen to you again, hear your sweet splashing, and steep my soul softly on the awe of childhood." Some commentators find in the elegiac Adagio an expression of Brahms' sorrow over the tragic death of Schumann.

This superlative recording is a notable addition to Victor's Masterpiece Series.

Washington Bi-Centennial

The only phonograph company so far to contribute to the current celebration of the two-hundredth birth of Washington seems to be Columbia which issues on 2599-D a coupling of George Cohan's bi-centennial song, *Father of the Land We Love*, and a *Medley of Washingtonian Songs*, played by the Columbia Orchestra under Robert Hood Bowers, with vocal choruses by a small, undesignated chorus. Cohan's piece is in his best flag-waving vein, and while there is a momentary disconcerting similarity to the current popular air, "Po-

tatoes are Cheaper," the song is emphatically patriotic and spirited, if hardly very dignified. The medley is Washingtonian by courtesy only, for it includes the Star Spangled Banner, which could have been known to Washington only as a drinking song, "To Anacreon in Heaven," for the Key's words were not written until 1814. The words to Hail Columbia were written only a year before Washington's death, but he undoubtedly was familiar with them, for they were adapted to Phile's "President's March" written some years before in Washington's own honor. The words of America were not written until 1832, but the music was of course well-known during Revolutionary Days as the British "God Save the King," and American verses, including "God Save George Washington" had been adapted to it. Yankee Doodle is of course closely associated with Washington and the Revolutionary days.

It would be passing up an unusual opportunity if some of the other songs and pieces most familiar to Washington were not recorded. Many of these have currently been issued in new editions for the bi-centennial and are being given frequent performance. Meanwhile the present spirited, if somewhat over-bumptious, little disc has its place.

OPERATIC

WEINBERGER: *Schwanda*—*Wie kann ich denn vergessen was mein Liebste war*, and *Ich bin der Schwanda*, sung by THEODORE SCHEIDL with chorus and orchestra conducted by HERMANN WEIGERT. BRUNSWICK 00213 (D12 \$).

These excerpts from Weinberger's euphonious opera are an unalloyed delight. Scheidl, who is a member of the Berlin State Opera is a magnificent Dudelsackpfeifer, a baritone who at times sounds like a tenor. With a lusty chorus and a splendid orchestra for background, the performance leaves nothing to be desired. An exceptional record that should awaken widespread interest.

PUCCINI: *Madam Butterfly*—*Un bel di vedremo*, and BIZET: *Carmen*—*Je dis que rien ne m'epouvrante*, sung in German by Elizabeth Rethberg with orchestra conducted by DR. F. WEISSMANN. COLUMBIA G-9050-M (D12 \$).

One's admiration for Madame Rethberg's recorded performances continues to grow. Both these well-known numbers have been done before and are adequately represented in record catalogues, but Madame Rethberg's glorious voice and artistry make her performances outstanding, especially in the Carmen. The ubiquitous Dr. Weissmann provides just the right orchestral background.

THOMAS: *Mignon*—*Io son Titania*, and BIANCHINI *Ninna-Nanna*, sung by TOTI DAL MONTE, accompanied by members of La Scala Orchestra, Milan, conducted by CARLO SABAJNO. VICTOR 7485-B (D12 \$).

Toti Dal Monte returns to the list after some absence. Both the Polonaise and the berceuse are sung with sincerity and understanding. The performance is gracious and quite Italianate in vein. The accompaniment is expressive, but over-sweetness is avoided.

SONGS

LOEWE: EDWARD, and WOLFE: *De Glory Road* sung by LAWRENCE TIBBETT with piano accompaniment by STEWART WILLE.

It was inevitable that Tibbett would make a recording of these two concert hall favourites. His admirers will find both tremendously effective. Musically the Loewe ballad is the more interesting and Tibbett delivers it with appropriate gusto. Wolfe's setting of a Negro's set-to with the Lord and the Devil requires considerable

skill in acting as well as singing and Tibbett does both to perfection.

SCHUBERT: *Am Meer*, and *Der Wanderer*, sung by RICHARD TAUBER, with orchestra conducted by ERNST HAUKE. COLUMBIA G-9051-M (D12, \$2.00).

Another re-pressing of an Odeon release. The Tauber list which must prove to be a gold mine for Columbia seemingly has no end. That the performances are all of such high calibre reflects to the great credit of the veteran Lieder singer. The recording is first-rate.

BRAHMS: *Ständchen*, Op. 106, No. 1, and *Minnelied*, Op. 71, No. 5, sung in German by HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS, with piano accompaniments by FRANZ RUPP. BRUNSWICK 85008 (D10, \$1.25).

The Schlusnus *Lieder* series has been given such warm recommendation in the past, that the current release needs be praised only for its fine choice of selections and for the unusually able and individual accompaniments by Franz Rupp. I like too the apt choice of tempos; the *Minnelied* is not taken too slow (and sung with restrained, yet full voice), and the *Serenade* is done with very agreeable buoyancy. Those who enjoy the *Minnelied*, one of Brahms' loveliest melodies, would do well to look up the viola transcription played by Lionel Tertis and recorded by Columbia a year or so ago.

SCHNEIDER: *Far Apart*, and SPEAKS: *The Prayer Perfect*, sung in English by JOHN McCORMACK, with piano accompaniment in the former by EDWIN SCHNEIDER, organ (HERBERT DAWSON) and string quintet accompaniment in the latter. VICTOR 1554 (D10, \$1.50).

"*Far Apart*," by McCormack's capable accompanist, was first released in England, where it was coupled with O'Brien's "The Fairy Tree." It is a unpretentious lyric of slight musical value, and its best quality, simplicity, is somewhat marred by McCormack's tendency to drag the tempo and to over-sing. Oley Speaks' "Prayer Perfect" is a devotional counterpart of the all-too-familiar "Perfect Song." It is sung with less sentimentality than one would expect from the music, and McCormack's voice is of unusually rich quality. The accompanying organ is played satisfactorily enough, but the string quintet is so discreet as to be negligible.

BACH: *Two Chorales*—*Ach, bleib' mit deiner Gnade* and *O Heil' ger Geist, kehr' bei uns ein*, sung in German by LOTTE LEHMAN, with organ accompaniments by PAUL MANIA. COLUMBIA G-4062-M (D10, \$1.25).

This disc is a sequel to Columbia G-4057-M, reviewed in last December's P. M. R. Again one hears the warmly colorful singing we have learned to expect from Mme. Lehmann, backed up ineffectively by a shaky toned studio organ. It should be repeated that these are not true chorales, rather solo arrangements of old German hymn tunes, with a choral accompaniment loosely adapted from Bach's harmonizations, to which are added free organ preludes and postludes. I was unable to find the pieces, with the words given here, in my complete collection of Bach chorales, but diligent search revealed that the first melody is a very slightly altered version of a tune by Melchoir Vulpius (1609) used by Bach to the words, "Christus, der ist mein Leben." The second is the same melody as Philipp Nicolai's (1599) "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern." The Bach chorale arrangements are respectively Nos. 46 and 375 of the B. & H. complete edition.

Gandhi's Spiritual Message

The Gandhi recording, mentioned in a recent "Phonographic Echo" as appearing in England, has been promptly re-pressed by Columbia in this country. The record number is 2069-M, ten-inch, price \$1.00. Both

sides of the disc are taken up by the Mahatma's address, which is given in English and is concerned exclusively with spiritual subjects. The recording is good, and the message easily understandable. A most unusual recording, and one that will be of great historic value.

POPULAR - DANCE RECORDED RHYTHM

Show Numbers

The only new show represented this month is Vincent Youmans' "Through the Years," with Drums in My Heart and Kinda Like You played by *Leo Reisman* in attractive style on Victor 22915.

Abe Lyman's "Of Thee I Sing" medley was incorrectly described in the advance notice last month. The disc is Brunswick 20103, one side of which is given over to three hits from the Gershwin show, and the other to four hits from Ed Wynn's "Laugh Parade." The vocal chorusers are Neely, Rowland, Robertson, and Sylvano. Also from the "Laugh Parade" is "You're My Everything," played by *Buddy Campbell* (Okeh 41545) and *Ben Selvin* (Columbia 2596-D), both in routine fashion. Campbell is likewise less spirited than usual in his coupling, *Af Wiedersehen My Dear*, while Selvin's When We're Alone—a penthouse idyll—is sweetly colorless. *Russ Columbo* does the only vocalization of You're My Everything, thickly saccharined, and coupled with an equally honeyed Just Friends (Victor 22909).

On the Victor long-playing list, single-faced ten-inch discs, 85c each, is a collection of *Leo Reisman's* gems from Kern's score to "The Cat and the Fiddle": Overture, Night was made for love, One Moment, Alone, French March, Poor Pierrot, She didn't say yes, Try to Forget (L-16005). *Nat Shilkret* leads the Victor orchestra in the waltz, Don't Ask Me Why, from Heywood Broun's late "Shoot the Works," coupled with a new version of the "tango Valentino"—Fate (L-16004).

Film Hits

The Gershwin Bros.' score for the Fox Gaynor-Farrell opus, "Delicious," is pretty slight compared with that of "Of Thee I Sing." (I except, of course, the "rivets" music later developed into the "Second Rhapsody.") Three platter versions of "Delishious" are out this month. *Shilkret* does it in pretty methodical fashion on Victor 22902, and the coupling, Somebody from Somewhere—a graceful number from the same film—is played slowly, sentimentally. The vocalists are respectively Paul Small and *Sylvia Froos*, with the latter scoring. *Abe Lyman* gives "Delishious" crisper, more varied and rhythmic treatment on Brunswick 6255, and couples it with a richly Teutonically sentimental Auf Wiedersehen My Dear, featuring an accordion. *Ben Selvin's* version of Delishious is not as crisp as Lyman's, but it is more lyrical and more richly toned than Shilkret's. The coupling is a catchy, clean recorded performance of Was That the Human Thing to Do?, in which the vocal chorusers displays better enunciation than the average (Columbia 2604-D).

"Possessed" (M-G-M film) is also represented by three versions of its featured song, How Long Will It Last? *Leo Reisman* plays it in graceful, light concert style (Victor 22910). *Ted Wallace* (Columbia 2601-D) and *Jacques Renard* (Brunswick 6244) do it smoothly, with Renard's bland fiddling starring. Shilkret's coupling is *Arden and Ohman's* sturdy, well articulated version of When We're Alone, exhibiting some nice lyrical and rhythmical contrasts; Wallace's is Starlight; Renard's is a songful but methodical Just Friends.

Leo Reisman does Someday I'll Find You, from Cow-

ard's "Private Lives" (M-G-M film) and the Paradise Waltz from RKO-Pathé's "A Woman Commands" (Victor 22904). Both performances are more in light symphonic than dance style. The former is a well modulated tune in attractive tonal dress (I like the nice flute solo), and the latter, after a vigorous symphonic introduction goes into a slow rich waltz, with flute again featured. *Frances Maddux's* choruses are good, especially the warm hummed phrases in the Paradise Waltz.

Crooners

The crooners, still smarting under Cardinal O'Connell's excommunication, are keeping pretty well under cover. *Russ Columbo* ventures out with Save the Last Dance for Me and All of Me (Victor 22903) and *Dick Robertson* with Somewhere in the West and Old-Fashioned Home in New Hampshire (Victor 23645). Both discs are of the excessively sentimental type under fire, redeemed if at all by the deft accompaniments. More interesting are *Sylvia Froos* in I Found You and When We're Alone (Victor 6248) and *Bing Crosby* in I Found You (to Helen Crawford's organ accompaniment) and Snuggled on Your Shoulder, very slow and lyrical with one good slow wa-wa passage (Brunswick 6248). Columbia's star, rotund *Kate Smith*, deserts Tin Pan Alley tunes for backwoods stuff, the penitentiary favorite, Twenty-One Years (enlivened with rustic color), and a more lyrical ballad of happenings in The Baggage Coach Ahead (Columbia 2605-D).

Popular Instrumentals

Jesse Crawford organizes band versions of Call Me Darling and Carolina's Calling Me (Victor 22901); *Terence Casey* unearths a large group of Father's Favorites (many British in origin) and dashes them off in spirited, none too polished theatre organ versions (Columbia 2593-D); and the *Gilmores*, assisted by an indefatigable traps artist, run through quiet, routine rhythmic piano duet performance of Rockin' Chair and Some of These Days (Victor 23316).

British Re-Pressings

Three of the leading British dance bands are included in the American lists this month, with first prize going to *Jack Hylton*, as usual, for his very graceful and light treatment of Dancing on the Ceiling, an American tune currently featured in the London show "Evergreen." The coupling is *Leo Reisman's* rich, but not too luscious There's Something in Your Eyes, featuring deep, organ-like harmonies in the accompaniments to the tune (Victor 22912—one of the best ballroom dance discs of the month). *Jack Payne's B. B. C. Dance Band* has recently left both B. B. C. and Columbia, but from his older Columbia recordings, now coming out under the Regal label, American Columbia picks a rich, but not too bland version of Kiss Me Goodnight, with Payne himself singing the chorus, and an odd composition in pseudo-Negro style, called Hosannah (Columbia 2603-D). It is a vigorous one-step, opening with a quasi-Oriental introduction, and going into a peppy British imitation of Negro idiom. The chorus is particularly artificial blackface, but the piece has considerable zip and swing. Least colorful of the group is *Ambrose* and the Mayfair orchestra in a slow songful I Found You, coupled with *Arden & Ohman's* Who's Your Little Who-zis, a sprightly performance, more interesting and better varied than any version of this piece I have yet heard (Victor 22893).

Hupfield Novelties

Victor Young features Herman Hupfield as soloist and composer of two novelty fox trots, Goopy Geer and Down the Old Back Road (Brunswick 6251). Goo-

py ("he plays the piano and he plays by ear") cavorts among the Rhapsody in Blue and Rachmaninoff's prelude as well as ha-chas. Hupfield is featured throughout as pianist and singer; bright and mildly amusing. Down the Old Back Road is a sprightly fantasy in familiar farmyard style, crisply played, and introducing the usual rustic fiddling and barnyard cries. It is catchily done.

Ronell's Rain on the Roof

Rain on the Roof, by the composer of Baby's Birthday Party, is not up to some of the unpublished white spirituals I have heard Ann Ronell play, but it is an attractive tune treated with deft rhythmical ingenuity. The *Casa Loma* orchestra plays it very gracefully, piquantly colored, and gets it off on the whole more effectively than Shilkret, whose performance is more vigorous but not so cleanly cut. *Casa Loma*'s coupling is a quiet yet well varied Starlight (Brunswick 6252) and Shilkret's is a routine version of the Wooden Soldier and the China Doll (Victor 22925—choruses by Burt Lorin).

Hit of the Week

The only Durium discs to come in feature *Nick Lucas*, deserting Brunswick to play a routine version of Evening in Caroline, and *Erno Rapée*'s orchestra (starring Paul Small) in a dull Save the Last Dance for Me and a peppy Ida. There is a good brief sax solo and some zippy kazoo work to be commended. The back of the discs contain pictures of the artists; evidently the scheme of selling advertising space on the back has not yet gone through.

Jack Denny to Victor

Jack Denny and his *Canadian Mount Royal Hotel* orchestra used to record for Brunswick, but they have not been heard from of late. Now they start off a new Victor contract with an opening of four double-sided discs: Goodnight Moon and Starlight (22906), Just Friends and Oh What a Thrill (22907), Auf Wiedersehen My Dear and There's a Million Ways of Saying I Love You (22917), How Can You Say You Love Me and Snuggled on Your Shoulder (22916). The playing is straight ballroom dance treatment throughout, but the arrangements are neatly made, the rhythmic handling quite brisk, and the tone attractive. There is some nice use of bells in bass in Goodnight Moon, and good use of concert orchestra style in Snuggled on Your Shoulder.

Waring and Whiteman

Waring, now firmly established as Kapellmeister at Roxy's finds time to record I'm Only Guessin' and Honest, Really, Truly (Victor 22900), and When the Blue of the Night (Victor 22894—coupled with Shilkret's I Thank You Mr. Moon). The treatment of Blue of the Night is quite good, especially the choral choruses, but can't disguise the banality of the tune. The other pieces are handled in interesting fashion, smooth but with mildly hot trumpet spicing, and fair choruses by the Girl Friends and Clare Hanlon. *Paul Whiteman* plays Don't Suppose and A Rose and A Kiss on Victor 22882, choruses by Jack Fulton. Both are slow, sentimental; best features are the orchestral color and the apt use of guitar and sub-tone clarinet in the introduction to the latter piece. Tango Americano (Victor 22913), while played to conventional enough rhythm, is treated with more ingenuity, boasts a catchy tune, and is nicely scored. The coupling is likewise interesting: Reisman's Stepping Into Love (a Collingstone fox trot) with a fine choppy ostinato rhythm in the accompaniment, a graceful hesitant tune, and some well personalized chorussing by Harold Arlen. (Whiteman's Vilia—Victor 22885—mentioned last month, is a fox trot—not a waltz—from the "Merry Widow.")

Isham Jones

Isham has one of his best discs in Brunswick 6253, whereon he plays Let That Be a Lesson to You with fine full-voiced tone, a good surge, and a vocal refrain sung by a deep bass that is a welcome relief from the inevitable feminized tenor type. The coupling is Shadows on the Window, also played with full tone and bright color, well recorded.

Miscellaneous Ballroom Dances

BRUNSWICK: the *Casa Loma* orchestra is less effective in Kiss by Kiss and One of Us Was Wrong (6256) than in either of its other two discs this month, but at that the arrangements and playing—good tone and smooth rhythm—make the most of the very conventional tunes. *Bennie Krueger* takes Was That the Human Thing to Do and Lies with considerable jauntiness. I like the trombone and celesta playing, also Bennie's own quiet saxing in the accompaniment to the vocal chorus of Lies (6246). *Ben Bernie* offers 6245 and 6250, playing Who's Your Little Who-zis and Oh What a Thrill on the former, Can't We Talk It Over and Wooden Soldier and China Doll on the latter. The orchestra has a good buoyant swing and clean color, and the Old Maestro's own choruses are in his familiar personalized manner, much preferable to the quavering dramatic refrain in Can't We Talk It Over by an unnamed chorussing.

OKEH: *Buddy Campbell* is unusually spiritless in One Little Kiss and One Little Quarrel (41548), while the *Cloverdale Country Club's* Carolina's Calling Me and Chances Are (41551) are in its customary smooth, undistinguished style.

Victor: *Ted Weems* exhibits a fine clean precision of tone and rhythm in She's So Nice, coupled with a sweeter This is My Lovesong on 22881 (refrains by Parker Gibbs and Wes Vaughn—recording good). *Gene Kardos* gets off I Wouldn't Change You for the World and Fate Introduced Me to You with strong clear tone, well recorded (22918); *Bert Lowe* is less songful than usual in his brisk versions of Was That the Human Thing to Do and The More You Hurt Me, featuring guitar and mildly hot trumpeting, refrains by Elmer Feldkamp (22908); another *Kardos* disc, included in the hot lists without great justification, suffers from the affected refrains by Dick Robertson. Tell-Tales is given rather dull straight treatment, but You're Foolin' Yourself has a fine easy swing and well marked rhythm, ending very emphatically (22897).

Dance Echoes

Guy Lombardo's Royal Canadians, ending their Columbia contract, have been the object of much dicker- ing from both Victor and Brunswick. The latter finally got the band on a year's contract. . . . *Ted Weems*, according to rumor, will make some records for Columbia, but under another name. . . . *Baby Marie*, talented child warbler now playing vaudeville in Chicago, is signed up to sing vocal refrains on four dance recordings for Columbia. . . . Best selling dance discs for January were Brunswick's Of Thee I Sing medley, Columbia's Too Late (Lombardo and Kate Smith), and Victor's Home (Peter Van Steeden). . . . In sheet music sales, Home remains the best seller for the last three months. . . . Best selling vocal disc was Brunswick's Dinah with Bing Crosby and the Mills Brothers.

Popular Hits from Abroad

The best of the current importations of British hits are numbers from John Murray Anderson's show "Bow Bells" (Ambrose and New Mayfair orchestras, Walker & Cochrane, Gertrude Lawrence, etc.); Noel Coward's own record of Lover of my Dreams from "Cavalcade". and other numbers by Jack Hylton and Jack Payne;

music from the "White Horse Inn" by the London Theatre Orchestra, New Mayfair Orchestra, Jack Hylton, etc. Specially recommended from the miscellaneous dance discs are Jack Hylton's new Decca releases (more Rhymes, I Found You, etc.) and Spike Hughes' hot Decca records (Harlem Symphony, dedicated to Duke Ellington, etc.).

Other records of note are those by Josephine Baker (French Columbia), Mistinguett (French Odeon), Raquel Meller (French Odeon), Paul Robeson (H. M. V.—Negro Spiritual Medley with Jack Hylton's orchestra), and the first discs from the new film hit "Der Kongress Tanz" (Jack Hylton's and Marek Weber's orchestra, Irene Eisinger, etc.).

Victor issues domestically Jack Hylton's fine twelve-inch coupling of Good Night Sweetheart and My Sunshine is You (Victor 36048).

Dark Horse

Hot honors for the month fall among two standard bands and a newcomer, Eliot Everett, making a debut in the Victor red hot lists (22921). Everett's band, on which I have no information as yet, is obviously a highly capable one and boasts a masterly arranger. The pieces played are Rube Bloom's Soliloquy and Kardos' Blue Danube Blues, both in unusually striking arrangements. Soliloquy is done in exceedingly crisp, precise fashion; a beautiful piece of trim playing, not especially hot, but marvellously put together. It's impossible to resist. Blue Danube Blues introduces the Strauss tune in original fashion on the trumpets against a flowing passage for saxes and piano, with brilliant trombone, trumpet, clarinet solos later. The arrangement is a little masterpiece and the rhythmic treatment and playing are both daring and delicate. Note the clever snatch of O Tannenbaum just before the trumpet solo. Everett's band will bear close watching.

Casa Loma

The always brilliant *Casa Loma* band turns in one of its finest records in Brunswick 6242, Gifford's Black Jazz and Maniacs' Ball. The former piece is a dashing display of choppy, broken rhythms, with clever use of ostinato bass passages, trombone and clarinet solos starring, and an effective ending. Maniacs' Ball is a virtuoso piece of fleet playing, well restrained, but red hot and high speed, and boasting an exuberant buoyancy and swing. The scoring is masterly, with running clarinet and sax solos, and fine ensemble precision. The *Casa Loma* men are all youngsters, but they show hot veterans a convincing demonstration of polished, virtuoso hot jazz playing at its very best.

Your Nichols' Worth

Red's Pennies continue their new series with the prison ballad, Twenty-One Years, dressed-up in fairly hot stripes, and a revival of that grand old tune, My Sweetie Went Away (Brunswick 6241). Twenty-One years is given over largely to a pretty good vocal refrain, but between the verses there is ample opportunity for starring solos by Jimmy Dorsey against guitar and string bass, and some neat trumpeting by Red toward the end. My Sweetie Went Away is more striking, beautifully scored. Red begins with an attractive easy-going trumpet solo against celesta and string bass (the latter a new addition to the band). Later Jimmie Dorsey has a fine clarinet solo over sustained harmonies employing discreet use of the celesta; Miff Mole has a brief trombone solo, and Red's Trumpet with Schutt's celesta wind up.

Louis

Only one of *Armstrong's* two discs has reached me for review, but this is out from both Columbia (2600-D)

and Okeh (41550). The pieces are Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea and Kickin' the Gong Around. (Home and All of Me, on Okeh 41552, has not yet arrived for review.) The Devil and the Sea piece is taken with good steady swing. Louis sings a chorus, most noteworthy for its effective trailing off effects, but the playing really gets hot with Louis' trumpet solo after the refrain. The rhapsodical flexible trumpeting reaches its high point in a brilliant glissando up to a long-held note, followed by another gliss to a solo in the top range. There is more fine trumpeting in Kickin' the Gong Around, and Louis' vocal is brilliant, especially after he shouts, "Double it up, Dave!", and goes into a fast tempo.

In response to inquiries concerning the present personnel of Louis Armstrong's band, I should say that the various members were introduced by Louis in his recent record of I Got Rhythm. In case you couldn't catch them all, I append the list: Charles Alexander, piano; John Lindgren, bass; Charles "Tubby" Hall, drums; Preston Jackson, trombone; Zilmer Randolph, 2nd trumpet and arranger; George James, Lester Boone, and Al Washington, saxes; and Mike McKendricks, banjo.

Rhythmic Spirituals

Kardos does some vigorous, peppy playing in Razaf's Glory, coupled with a rowdy, energetic revival of Alexander's Ragtime Band on Victor 22920. Dick Robertson gets more pep into his vocal refrains than I have heard from him before, but he doesn't come up to the band itself. On Brunswick 579, Perry Bechtel's Colonels reveal finished examples of Southern style playing in Over on the Other Side of Glory and Gospel Train. Both pieces contain some good rhapsodical playing and interesting arrangements, and while the vocals are not up to Paul Tremaine's, they are decidedly good.

Hot Miscellany

I have never yet heard a version of Ellington's Creole Love Call to equal the Duke's own for Victor, but on Columbia 2597-D Clyde McCoy does quite well with it. There is some nice sweet hot playing, but I miss Sonny Greer's inimitable wa-was. The coupling is a welcome revival of Old Fashioned Love from "Runnin' Wild," a great tune, given good brisk treatment here. Gene Kardos' best disc of the month is Business in F and Cornfed Gal on Victor 22899. The former is a good sturdy tune, with a vigorous refrain by Gene himself; the latter is a jaunty air, displaying some deft woodwind playing. Walter Brown's performances of I Don't Know Why and Oh Mon'ah are rather dull, built up on a constant background of two very mechanical sounding pianos (Victor 23314). Julia Gerrity and Blanche Calloway share sides of Victor 22896 with Sittin' on a Rubbish Can and Blue Memories. Both are shrill, uncharacteristic. Snooks and his Memphis Stompers are likewise dull in a conventional Why Did it Have to be Me, but the coupling, Nothin' to do but Love is much better, a fine broad swing, very catchily and danceably played (Victor 22895). Gus Hasston does moderately well with Kickin' the Gong Around and River Stay 'Way from my Door (Victor 22898). The playing is not so hot, but the vocals (Gus himself) are good, especially the wavering wordless singing in the gong piece. Roane's Pennsylvanians have lately been enjoined by Fred Waring from the use of the word Pennsylvanians, to which he has exclusive rights. They are to appear as Roane's Collegians henceforth. Meanwhile they play Chinatown and When You and I Were Young Maggie (Victor 22919), Put That Sun Back in the Sky and Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea (Victor 22922). The first is merely noisy, the

second a spirited well scored revival, the third a fine swinging air with a catchy choral refrain, the last distinguished by "Snowball's" peppy wa-wa work.

Blacks and Blues

The prize sermon of the month is *Rev. Snowball's* discourse on Moses and the Bull Rush (Columbia 15738). The *Dunham Jubilee Singers* do lugubrious harmonizations of If We Go to Hell Who Cares and See My Friends Again (Columbia 14643), while the *Monarch Jazz Quartet* shouts similarly, but more jazzily, in Pleading Blues and Just too Late. Best of the blues singers are *Clara Smith* and *Gussie Williams*. Clara sings a subtly roguish ditty of a Street Department Papa and a sad plaint about an erring daddy, Picture on the Wall (Columbia 14645). Gussie reveals a nice voice and a rare imagination in saucy songs of It's Too Slippery and Take Me Out and You Will See, done to quietly effective piano accompaniments (Okeh 8934). *Skeeter Skoot's* vaudeville songs, done in pseudo-Armstrong fashion, All of Me and You Rascal You, aren't much except for the very smooth, fast movie pianoing in the former.

Jazz Echoes

Irving Mill has turned his Blue Rhythm Band over to the leadership of a Britisher, Baron Lee. Edgar Hayes remains as starring pianist, and the band is now playing at the Cotton Club until Cab Calloway returns April 1st. . . . Mills has just signed a contract with Brunswick for 24 records each from Duke Ellington (now playing for Brunswick under his own name), Cab Calloway, and the Baron Lee Blue Rhythm Band. The first Duke release, not yet come in for review, is Brunswick 6265, Rose Room and It Don't Mean a Thing. . . . The best-selling hot discs are Cab Calloway's Kickin' the Gong Around; Louis Armstrong's Chinatown, Don Redman's I Heard, and the Mills Bros' Tiger Rag and You Rascal You. . . .

—RUFE HARLEM.

THE PHONOPHILE'S BOOKSHELF

Music and Disease

DISEASES OF THE MUSICAL PROFESSION. A systematic presentation of their causes, symptoms and methods of treatment. By Kurt Singer. Translated from the German by Wladimir Lakond. New York: Greenberg Co. 253 pp. \$3.00.

Some years ago several P. M. R. correspondents inquired for information regarding the use of phonographic music and records in the treatment of mental diseases. Among them was a member of the staff at the Bellevue Hospital in New York, where apparently some use is already being made of records. Practically no authentic information was available on the subject at that time, and Kurt Singer's book is probably the first non-technical contribution to the highly important subject of music's therapeutic value. Herr Singer is a Berlin music critic and editor of considerable eminence; he is also a doctor of medicine and has made a particular study of neurology. He is especially well equipped to write on this subject, and his chapters on violinists' and pianists' cramps, diseases of the vocal apparatus, psychopathic musical personalities, and the healing effects of music are valuable contributions to both musical psychology and therapeutics. His book may well be a stepping stone to the increased use of music, and particularly of records, in hospitals and asylums.

The Phonograph Monthly Review

Community Music

MUSIC IN AMERICAN LIFE: Present and Future. Prepared for the National Recreation Association by Agustus Delafield Zanzig, with a foreword by Daniel Gregory Mason. New York: Oxford University Press. 560 pp. \$3.50.

Since Mr. Zanzig recently conducted a number of records for the Educational Department of the Victor Company, his detailed study of community music in America has a special interest for phonophiles. The book is a large one, extensively bolstered up with facts concerning musical activities throughout the country. The lists of opportunities to develop musical interests, the studies of community music making in such pioneer cities as Flint, Michigan, are particularly valuable. The subject has never been treated comprehensively before, and Mr. Zanzig covers it thoroughly.

Bruckner and Mahler

CHORD AND DISCORD. Official Journal of the Bruckner Society of America. Edited by Gabriel Engel. Vol. 1, No. 1, February 1932.

Under the impetus of a renewed emphasis on the works of Bruckner and Mahler in American symphonic programs, the Bruckner Society expands its activities to cover the publication of an official journal. No price is given, but presumably it is free to society members. The first issue is a vigorous little booklet of twenty-four pages, vibrating with the fervid enthusiasm of a "cause." The leading articles are "New Symphonic Horizons" by the editor, Gabriel Engel, a study of the reaction of critics to new music and particularly that of Bruckner and Mahler; "A Word to Anti-Brucknerites" by Th. Otterstroem; a study of Bruckner's masses by Mrs. Woods Bechman, and of "Mahler's Musical Language" by Gabriel Engel. There are detailed notes on current Bruckner and Mahler performances, with liberal quotation of press criticism. Romain Rolland, Koussevitzky, and others contribute brief notes, and there are various items of interest to members of the society: presentation of medals, reduction of charges for the rights of performance of B. and M. works; a brief and rather inadequate note on B. and M. recordings.

Gabriel Engel, the editor, is the author of the monograph on Bruckner, reviewed in the August 1931, P. M. R., and of a similar monograph on Mahler, announced to be in preparation. Those interested may obtain a prospectus of the society, its list of publications, etc., from the Secretary, Robert G. Grey, 222 West 83rd Street, New York City. Annual dues are \$1.00.

F. F.

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